

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 SSO-00 SS-15 NSCE-00
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SIL-01 LAB-04 /064 W
-----058800 022210Z /66

O 022132Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9412
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 4203

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, CI
SUBJ: HUNGER STRIKE: STATUS ON TWELFTH DAY

REFS: SANTIAGO 4155 AND PREVIOUS

1. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT CARDINAL SILVA MET JUNE 1 WITH INTERIOR MINISTER FERNANDEZ AND THAT THERE IS AGREEMENT AMONG ALL PARTIES (INCLUDING RELATIVES ENGAGED IN THE HUNGER STRIKE) WITH A PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A COMMISSION OF EMINENT CHILEANS TO ATTEMPT TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM OF THE DISAPPEARED PERSONS. ACCORDING TO THIS ACCOUNT, THE MAJOR STUMBLING BLOCK TO ENDING THE HUNGER STRIKE IS THE GOC REQUIREMENT THAT THE STRIKE END BEFORE THE COMMISSION IS ANNOUNCED -- WHEREAS THE RELATIVES INSIST ON AN ANNOUNCEMENT BEFORE THEY END THEIR STRIKE.

2. A CHURCH SOURCE TELLS US, HOWEVER, THAT THE CARDINAL HAS NOT YET RECEIVED THE GOC'S RESPONSE. THIS MAY BE TRUE IN A FORMAL SENSE. IT MAY BE A REFERENCE TO THE PROBLEM DESCRIBED ABOVE OR IT MAY MEAN THAT THERE ARE STILL UNRESOLVED DETAILS OF THE COMPOSITION AND OPERATIONS OF THE COMMISSION. THERE HAVE BEEN
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SUGGESTIONS, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT CHURCH REPRESENTATIVES MAY BE WILLING TO PARTICIPATE ON THE BODY, AND THAT THE COMMISSION MAY, IN THOSE CASES WHERE IT IS NOT ABLE OTHERWISE TO ACCOUNT FOR A MISSING PERSON, HAVE THE POWER TO DECLARE HIM "PRESUMPTIVELY DEAD".

3. APPARENTLY MANY OF THE NON-RELATIVE PARTICIPANTS

IN THE HUNGER STRIKE HAVE HEEDDED THE CARDINAL'S MAY 31
CALL TO LEAVE THE CHURCHES. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THE
TOTAL NUMBER OF STRIKERS IS NOW UNDER 100. THE ONLY
REPORT OF NEW ADHESIONS TODAY IS THAT OF FOUR LABOR
LEADERS (AT LEAST THREE OF WHOM ARE COMMUNISTS) WHO
OCCUPIED THE LOCAL ILO OFFICES AND PROMISE TO REMAIN
UNTIL NOON JUNE 5.
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